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# The Arlington

Connection

**WELLBEING**

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PHOTO BY SHIRLEY RUHE/ARLINGTON CONNECTION

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**GOVERNOR ORDERS  
STAY-AT-HOME ORDER**

Governor Ralph Northam issued a statewide Stay-at-Home Order this week to protect the health and safety of Virginians and mitigate the spread of the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. The executive order takes effect immediately and will remain in place until June 10, 2020, unless amended or rescinded by a further executive order. The order directs all Virginians to stay home except in extremely limited circumstances. Individuals may leave their residence for allowable travel, including to seek medical attention, work, care for family or household members, obtain goods and services like groceries, prescriptions, and others as outlined in Executive Order 53, and engage in outdoor activity with strict social distancing requirements. The executive order also directs all Virginia institutions of higher education to stop in-person classes and instruction. Private campgrounds must close for short-term stays, and beaches will be closed statewide except for fishing and exercise.

**GOVERNOR ORDERS  
STATEWIDE CLOSURES**

Governor Ralph Northam last week issued a statewide order to protect the health and safety of Virginians and reduce the spread of the novel coronavirus, or COVID-19. Executive Order 53 orders the closure of certain non-essential businesses, bans all gatherings of more than 10 people, and closes all K-12 schools for the remainder of the academic year. This order went into effect at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020 and will remain in place until 11:59 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, 2020.

**Public Gatherings --** All gatherings of more than 10 people are banned statewide, beginning at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020. This does not include gatherings that involve the provision of health care or medical services, access to essential services for low-income residents, such as food banks; operations of the media; law enforcement agencies; or operations of government.

**K-12 Schools --** All schools will remain closed through the end of this academic year. The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will issue guidance to help divisions execute plans to continue instruction, while ensuring students are served equitably, regardless of income level, access to technology, English learner status, or special needs.

**Recreation and Entertainment Businesses --** The following recreation and entertainment businesses are considered non-essential and must close to the public beginning at 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, March 24, 2020:

Theaters, performing arts centers, concert venues, museums, and other indoor entertainment centers;  
Fitness centers, gymnasiums, recreation centers, indoor sports facilities, indoor exercise facilities;  
Beauty salons, barber shops, spas, massage parlors, tanning salons, tattoo shops, and any other

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Rula Minawi and Sarah Morgan with Community In Schools non-profit are across the parking lot of Barrett Elementary handing out Backpack Buddies for weekend meals. They have partnered with Arlington Food Assistance Center to provide the packages with such items as juice, cereal, milk, macaroni and tomato sauce to the students at the schools which they serve.



Arlington drive-through coronavirus sample testing site on Quincy Street. By appointment only, between 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

## Two Weeks Under the Belt—What Next?

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

As of March 30, Virginia has tested 13,401, identified 1,250 coronavirus cases with 165 hospitalized and 27 deaths. In Arlington, 104 cases have been reported. Arlington opens a drive-through coronavirus test sample site on Quincy Street by appointment only from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

The statewide numbers indicate the largest percentage of 18.1 percent reported in the 50-59 year-old age group, with 16.5 percent reported in both the 40-49 year-old group and the 20-29 year-old age group.

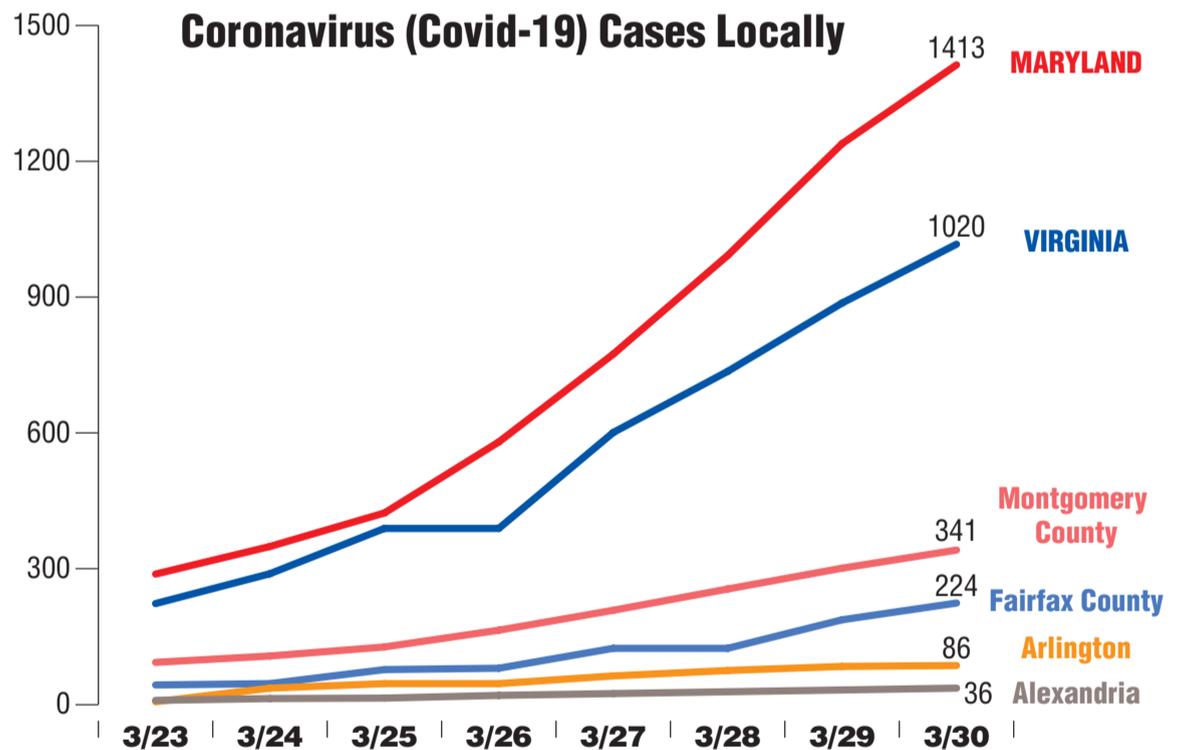
Arlington County expands from two to five grab-and-go sites that provide free breakfasts and lunches during school closures. The meals are available at Barrett Elementary, Randolph Elementary,

Kenmore Middle School, Campbell Elementary School, Dr. Charles L. Drew Elementary School from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

A member of the Arlington County Fire Department tested positive for COVID-19 and is managing the illness at home and reportedly doing well. The Department indicates the Arlington County Public Health Department “has been involved with this case and has investigated any potential exposures to other people and patients who came in contact with the individual.” In addition, ACFD indicates they have changed their procedures to continue to provide high-quality medical care while limiting the number of Emergency Medical providers who make close contact with patients.

The Arlington County Solid Waste Bureau notifies customers they would suspend bulk curbside

SEE TWO WEEKS, PAGE 6



## Stay Home Arlington Requires Compliance with Governor's Stay at Home Order.

In accordance with Gov. Ralph Northam's Stay At Home Order issued Monday, Arlington County Board Chair Libby Garvey and County Manager Mark Schwartz are telling all Arlingtonians to stay home.

Everyone is required to stay home, with exceptions for buying food, caring for family members, seeking medical attention, going to work, or volunteering for a nonprofit. The governor's order does allow

individual exercise, provided people comply with social distancing guidelines of staying six feet apart from people outside their household.

All public and private gatherings or 10 or more people continue to be prohibited. Social distancing guidelines remain in place for small groups.

“Every Arlingtonian must do their part to stop the spread of COVID-19,” Board Chair Libby Garvey said. “It will take all of us

complying, not just most of us. Social distancing and frequent handwashing are the best way to combat the coronavirus. So stay at home to help save lives.”

All County and APS parks and facilities (parks, fields, playgrounds, restrooms, tracks, dog parks and athletic courts) remain closed. Do not enter closed facilities. Paved and hiking trails in Arlington remain open, with strict social distancing in place, except for household members. “We

have to protect our most precious asset in Arlington — people,” Schwartz said. “The coronavirus affects people of all ages. People who are gathering still put themselves, their neighbors, our healthcare workers and other frontline personnel at risk.” Arlington encourages the community to stay connected with family, friends, and neighbors while still practicing social distancing. Look out for anyone who may be isolated during this time, by calling,

texting, emailing, or talking through the door. “In these unprecedented times, the best way for Arlington to come together is to stay apart,” Garvey said. “However, those few people who have not been taking the COVID-19 crisis seriously and who have not been taking the responsible measures we all must take with social distancing are likely to experience increased enforcement.”

# Arlington Teachers, Students Pursue Eco-Friendly Policy

**Reduce, reuse, recycle, rot: students, volunteers and teachers taking the lead.**

By EDEN BROWN  
THE CONNECTION

You've heard of the 3Rs? Reading, wRiting, and aRithmetic? Some students and teachers at Arlington Public Schools are learning the Four Rs with their ABCs: and the students are paying rapt attention.

Before the pandemic shut down group activities, March 24 was to be the follow up meeting for an action group that met last year to gauge public interest in pursuing the 4 Rs: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Rot.

The November, 2019 meeting was opened by Elenor Hodges, executive director, EcoAction Arlington; Allan Shneron, R4 Action Group of EcoAction Arlington; and Mimi Shah, R4 Action Group. All three activists believe teaching children the 4Rs is the secret to success in the effort to educate all Arlingtonians. Children have a vested interest in sustainability and love telling their parents what they should do.

Three things were immediately apparent from the panel: there is a lot going on; it is at the initiative of volunteers, students and teachers; and we could be doing a lot more. The panel on current waste management practices included Laura Watchman, Yorktown HS parent and also on APS Sustainability Committee; Katherine Williams and Kristin Wine, Discovery Elementary School teachers; Mimi Shah, Nottingham ES parent and R4 Action Group member; and Susan Spranger, Fleet ES teacher.

What is being done: Liz Rugaber, Taylor Elementary parent & PTA President, told the group that about 8-9 gallons/day of liquid (mostly milk, some juice, less water) is separately collected and then poured down the cafeteria drain each lunchtime. That is 200 gallons a month diverted from the trash. Students just divert liquid from the trash so it goes down the drain instead.

This is not a universal procedure at APS, even though diverting liquid from the cafeteria trash/recycling bins, and hence reducing their weight, represents a cost savings to APS. The practice at Taylor also teaches kids to "think before you toss," a lesson lost elsewhere, because there is no overall APS policy to make this practice universal, according to R4 activists. Efforts to get APS leadership more interested have not been successful.

Mimi Shah, Green Team leader at Nottingham ES, noted her R4 Action Group took the lead, surveying a sample of students at all grade levels, conducting a waste audit, and meeting with key constituent groups like the school's Planet Partners Club, faculty, the custodial staff, the student government association and holding lunch hour discussions on recycling with all grade levels. They then made major changes in what kids were doing in the lunchroom.

Single use plastic water bottles, plastic straws, plastic wrapped utensils, and plastic condiment packets were traded in for more eco-friendly dispensers. Waste was reduced when uneaten food was



Mimi Shah addresses the group of parents, students, and residents at Central Library in November.



Kai Rasmussen (background) and his friend Noah, foreground, two TJ middle school students with an intense interest in sustainable practices, listened attentively at 8:30 on a school night to learn more about sustainable schools.

PHOTOS BY EDEN BROWN/THE CONNECTION

not tossed indiscriminately, and the students got to see the food bus go to Arlington's Food Assistance Center.

Packing lunches from home with food the students like was part of the effort. But even packed lunches can come with waste. Katherine

Williams and Kristin Wine, Discovery Elementary School teachers said, "Waste free lunch is hard. Change is hard. You have to change habits." Williams and Wine said they sent out a parent newsletter to help parents packing lunches make them more eco-friendly by packing cloth napkins, using "tet-racycle" boxes not plastic, avoid "go go squeeze" plastics, and using healthy alternatives to packaged food, like fresh fruit. The results at all three elementary schools were noticeable, as well as the compostable Wednesdays at Yorktown High School.

In November Eco-Action announced the Resource Bank (Resources for School Sustainability) as being available to School parents, teachers, etc. Things like food waste; cafeteria recycling programs; Green Team activities; posters, flyers, signs; and quizzes are in the bank for use by schools that want to join the program. The resource bank hopes to promote sharing and foster some uniformity across the schools. Right now, the schools function as silos, without a lot of communication or sharing across schools.

For more information, see: [www.ecoactionarlington.org](http://www.ecoactionarlington.org)

# Arlington, Alexandria, Fairfax State Representatives Push Through Anti-Plastic Bills

**Lopez, Ebbin and Favola pushed for new laws.**

By EDEN BROWN  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Chris Le Menestrel of McLean, who is an ardent environmentalist, has watched with amazement as bills that never could have passed a year ago took shape, thanks to local state representatives in Richmond. Instead of dying in committee, they made it across the threshold to become law thanks to the democratic majority.

"For those interested, plastic

bags do have a huge carbon footprint, not to mention their impact on the Chesapeake Bay and rivers," said Le Menestrel. here is a website to track such bills: <https://litterfreeva.org/legislation-tracker/>

Trash on streets and in waterways, most of it plastic and styrofoam, is an increasingly common sight in Northern Virginia. But local legislators, and activists like Le Menestrel, have something to celebrate. Looking back on the session, not all of the proposed anti-plastic bills passed, but some of them did:

SB11 - by Sen. Adam Ebbin (D-39). Local disposable plastic bag tax. Authorizes any county or city, beginning no earlier than January 1, 2021, to impose a tax of five cents per bag on disposable plastic bags provided to consumers by certain retailers, with certain bags being exempt from the tax. The bill allows every retailer that collects the tax to retain a portion of the five-cent tax and provides that the revenue accruing to the county or city shall be used for certain purposes including environmental

cleanup and the provision of reusable bags. The measure authorizes the Tax Commissioner to administer the tax.

HB 1151 - by Del. Alfonso Lopez (D--49) Plastic bag tax; use of revenues. Allows (but does not require) localities to impose a five-cent (\$0.05) per bag tax on plastic bags provided to customers by retailers in grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants, or drugstores. Certain products are exempt from the tax. The bill directs revenue from the local tax to be deposited into the Virginia

SEE PLASTIC, PAGE 5

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# Arlington Police Officers Reach Out Thru Reading

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

**D**etective Dorian Brooks moves from his traditional job as a school resource officer on the playground at McKinley Elementary School to the video room at The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD). He is reading one of his favorite books on Pages with Police, a virtual read aloud sponsored by ACPD on Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 2 p.m.

Brooks says he misses his kids at Swanson Middle School, Barrett Elementary and McKinley Elementary School where he serves as the school resource officer.

"I miss the daily interactions, playing games during recess, cards during lunch, trivia fun questions. I hand out candy. Every kid likes candy."

Brooks says he has chosen, "But It's Not My Fault" by Julia Brooks. "It's about taking responsibility for your actions and accountability."

He opens the book. "My name is Norman David Edwards. They call me Noodle. Sometimes things happen to me but they're not my fault." Noodle doesn't get his homework done, accidentally bumps into a classmate, can't stop talking and can't get his report done because



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**ACPD Detective Dorian Brooks reads to Arlington County students on Pages with the Police.**

he didn't return his library book, all not his fault.

Noodle's teacher points out it is not whose "fault" but whose "responsibility" and that he is in charge of his legs, arms, hands and tongue. She says mistakes can be good because they give you a chance to learn.

Brooks says he likes this book because it has a lot of important messages, like if you take responsibility for your actions and make mistakes, you can learn and improve. So far the first two days have had 3,700 views. Next week Pages with the Police will continue on Monday, Wednesday and Friday on the ACPD Facebook page.

## Anti-Plastic Bills

FROM PAGE 4

Water Quality Improvement Fund and the Virginia Natural Resources Commitment Fund. The bill allows every restaurant or retailer that collects the tax to retain one cent of the five-cent tax if the tax is paid in a timely manner. The bill incorporates HB 1673.

SB 193 patroned by Sen. Barbara Favola (D-31) Single-use plastic and expanded polystyrene products; local prohibition; local tax. This bill was incorporated into SB11, which was then co-patroned with Sen. Ebbin.

HB 533 - Patroned by Del. Betsy Carr (D-69)

Expanded polystyrene food service containers; prohibition; civil penalty. Prohibits the dispensing by a food vendor of prepared food to a customer in a single-use expanded polystyrene food service container, as defined in the bill. The bill requires certain chain restaurants to stop using such (styrofoam) containers by July 1, 2023, and sets the date for compliance by all food vendors as July 1, 2025. The bill exempts nonprofit organizations from the definition of "food vendor" and provides a

process by which a locality may grant consecutive one-year exemptions to individual food vendors on the basis of undue economic hardship. The bill provides a civil penalty of not more than \$50 for each day of violation, to be collected in a civil action brought by the Attorney General or the relevant locality. The penalties collected are to be deposited in the Litter Control and Recycling Fund or to the treasury of the relevant locality, as appropriate. A portion of the penalties deposited in the Fund are to be used for public information campaigns to discourage the sale and use of expanded polystyrene products. Finally, the bill directs the Department of Environmental Quality to post to its website information on compliance and the filing of complaints. This bill incorporates HB 1046 and HB 1347 and contains a reenactment clause.

Legislators are currently concerned with the immediate threat of the Coronavirus, its impact on Virginians and on the state budget. The implementation of the bills could take a back seat, for now, to the more immediate healthcare and economic problems stemming from the crisis.

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PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUHE/THE CONNECTION

East Falls Church metro station is one of 17 stations closed March 26. The metro parking lot which is usually packed to overflow with commuters stands empty March 27.

# Two Weeks Under the Belt—What Next?



Arlington County continues to deliver mulch to county residents.



FROM PAGE 3

collection for residential customers until further notice, but would continue trash, recycling and yard waste curbside collection, as well as mulch pick-up and delivery. Household hazardous materials drop off on Tuesdays and Thursdays continues by appointment only.

Residential trash tonnage has increased over 30 percent in the last week, so residents are asked to flatten cardboard boxes, keep spring cleaning piles in the garage or basement for now and not put extra bags outside of the receptacles.

**METRO CLOSED 17** stations on Thursday, March 26 to “conserve critical resources and protect health and safety of Metro employees and the public,” including

Virginia Square which is within walking distance to an adjacent station and Clarendon and East Falls Church with low ridership. The Arlington Cemetery station was closed last week. The combined effect of the station closures reduces the number of entrances requiring cleaning and staffing by 25 percent from 118 to 88. In addition, on March 24 Metro implemented rear door boarding for buses to enhance the safety of the frontline workforce. Exceptions are made for anyone needing the ADA boarding ramp for people using wheelchairs.

Since parks and recreation centers are closed, Arlington Parks and Recreation sends out a newsletter with ideas for projects including making binoculars out of two toilet paper rolls taped together with holes punched for string, making a



Children stop by for lunches and Scholastic Packets at Randolph Elementary, a newly added pick-up site, on March 26. By 11:40 am they had already served over 50 lunches.



PHOTOS BY SHIRLEY RUBE/THE CONNECTION

**No children at Tuckahoe Park on Sycamore Street. First you're welcome; then you aren't**

garden out of recyclable containers filled with dirt and planted with seeds, making a mood board out of images and shapes cut out of magazines or newspapers and taped to a large poster board.

Larry King reports the law firm where he works has had a great increase in people who have been calling checking on their wills. "Most of our clients are elderly or approaching that point in life. Their concerns got greater as they were closing up everything. Now they feel a greater sense of mortality."

Arlington County Farmers Markets can reopen the weekend of March 28 under guidance issued by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services that require no display or on site shopping. Arlington has three winter markets to choose from including Arlington Farmers Market, Pike Park Farmers Market and Westover Farmers Market. Check their websites for how to preorder.

For further up to date information call the County's hotline at 703-228-7999 Monday-Friday from 7 a.m.-7 p.m. or access the Virginia Public Health Center website.

**Little Falls Presbyterian Church joins many other community churches in moving to online services.**



## ACFD Firefighter Tests Positive for COVID-19

A member of the Arlington County Fire Department has tested positive for COVID-19. The individual is doing well and managing the illness at home, with the full support of family and the department. The Arlington County Public Health Division has been involved with this case and has investigated any potential exposures to other people and patients who came in close contact with the individual.

More broadly, since the start of COVID-19's spread in our area, the Fire Department has taken precautions to limit exposure to its employees and the public. The department is regularly researching best practices and recommendations from public health authorities and has implemented new Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) procedures along with its partners at Virginia Hospital Center. (View the equipment and ap-

pearance changes.)

The department has also adjusted its medical response procedures to continue to provide high-quality medical care while limiting the number of Emergency Medical providers who make close contact with the patients. While a full complement of providers are assigned to emergency medical calls, some will remain at the recommended distance and be called inside when necessary.

As a reminder, the public can slow the spread of COVID-19 by taking the following actions:

- ❖ Stay home in compliance with Gov. Ralph Northam's order.
- ❖ Frequently washing hands
- ❖ Social distancing
- ❖ Coughing into a tissue and immediately washing hands
- ❖ Staying at home if you feel sick

For more, call the COVID-19 hotline at 703-228-7999

## Arlington Community Foundation Distributes \$300,000+

Arlington Community Foundation has provided more than \$300,000 in emergency support to Arlington nonprofits through its COVID-19 Prompt Response Fund in just one week, with more funds being disbursed daily. "We heard loud and clear from our nonprofit partners that they needed to get funds into the hands of the helpers in our community quickly, as this is a time of exceptional need for our neighbors who are experiencing job loss and other crisis situations," said Arlington Community Foundation CEO and President Jennifer Owens. "Our network of nonprofit safety net providers has responded quickly, as have the many generous people in our community who have pitched in to help with contributions of time, talent, and treasure. We owed it to them to move swiftly to support their efforts."

At the onset of the COVID-19 outbreak in Arlington, the Community Foundation refocused its longstanding Prompt Response Fund exclusively on support to nonprofit organizations on the front lines with clients, patients, and residents impacted by the health crisis. This includes organizations focused on emergency food needs, health needs for the uninsured or underinsured, and support for hourly workers displaced from their wage-earning positions.

On March 18, Arlington Community Foundation received a \$1 million grant from Amazon, with \$350,000 specifically targeted for use in Arlington and the remainder spent around the region through other community foundations. The Washington Forrest Foundation also partnered in the Community Foundation's prompt-response effort, so far supporting 25 percent of the award amount of each grant that has been made.

"All expectations are that the hardship on individuals and families will only intensify as the weeks pass, and funds are limited," said Owens. "We continue to receive worthy applications as fast as we can respond, and we hope that businesses and individuals will continue to view the Prompt Response Fund as a way to effectively support the nonprofits who are providing crucial support for Arlington's most vulnerable residents." For the time being, said Owens, "Our internal committee will continue to review requests daily and send awards immediately by direct deposit to ensure that our partners aren't burdened or put in harm's way by handing checks for deposit. And as the community needs evolve, I'm confident our use of the funds will evolve to meet those needs." To learn more about the Community Foundation's Prompt Response Fund, including how to make a gift, please visit [www.arlcf.org](http://www.arlcf.org).

# 'Easy Women' Goes Virtual

Sold-out Signature Theatre show now available for digital streaming.

BY JEANNE THEISMANN  
THE CONNECTION

Signature Theatre, like other performing arts venues across the country, has been forced to temporarily close due to social distancing regulations amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In anticipation of this shut down, a special taping was made of one of the final performances of the world premiere play "Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes," which is now available for digital streaming.

"When it became apparent that Signature Theatre would have to close for the safety of our patrons, staff and artists, we worked quickly to produce a professional three-camera video in hopes that we could release it to the world," said Signature Theatre Managing Director Maggie Boland. "We have successfully worked with our union partners in order to provide a full-length video of Dani Stoller's Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes through our website."

Ticket holders of cancelled performances will have access to the streaming video with a limited number of streams available for sale to the public.

"I'm thrilled that audiences will still have this exciting new opportunity to see Dani



Shanara Gabrielle (Lee) and Jordan Slattery (Kitty) in Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes. The sold-out Signature Theatre production was canceled mid-run but has limited tickets available for digital streaming. [www.sigtheatre.org](http://www.sigtheatre.org)

Stoller's fresh and subversive new comedy," said Signature Theatre's Artistic Director Eric Schaeffer. "While we're disappointed that Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes

couldn't finish its run in the theater, we're proud to present a video that closely mirrors the in-theater experience."

Current ticket holders have been sent a

password protected link and those who wish to watch the production can purchase virtual tickets for \$35 at [SigTheatre.org](http://SigTheatre.org). The production, which played to near sold-out audiences from Feb. 18 through March 13, will be available online until April 12.

[easy cut here to end]

Easy Women Smoking Loose Cigarettes is directed by Stevie Zimmerman (4615 Theatre Company's Venus in Fur) and features John Austin (Arena Stage's Right to Be Forgotten, Kleptocracy) as Bobby, Shanara Gabrielle (Arena Stage's JUNK, Shakespeare Theatre Company's Romeo & Juliet) as Lee, Susan Rome (Arena Stage's Indecent, The Great Society) as Marian, Jordan Slattery (Best Medicine Rep Theater The Consul, The Tramp) as Kitty, and John Leslie Wolfe (Broadway's Parade, Signature's Titanic) as Richard.

Marian, the matriarch of a far-flung Jewish family, had happily settled into retirement life with her new husband Richard. However, when a pregnant niece, the troubled boy next door and a distressed daughter with a secret show up at her door, Marian's empty nest ends up a little fuller than she imagined.

[www.sigtheatre.org](http://www.sigtheatre.org)

PHOTO BY CHRISTOPHER MUELLER

## What To Do with Kids in the Kitchen?

BY SHIRLEY RUHE  
ARLINGTON CONNECTION

Two weeks home with the kids out of school and going stir crazy. What to do?

**MAKE PLAY DOUGH** and play restaurant. Create hamburgers, pasta, cupcakes or your favorite dish out of your play dough. Take orders on a notepad from your customers and deliver them their meal.

Favorite play dough recipe: (kids can mix play dough but adults should cook)

- 2 cups flour
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup salt
- 2 Tbs. cooking oil
- 2 Tbs. cream of tartar.

Put all in a saucepan, mix and cook until it gets sticky and pulls away from the side of the pan. Divide in half and put a different food color in each half. Scoop out and let cool on foil. Store in a plastic bag to keep soft. Shape into your favorite foods for your restaurant.

### MAKE SUET FOR THE BIRDS

Put the suet outside where



PHOTO BY RACHEL MCKEAN

### Make play dough and play restaurant

you can see it and sit in the yard or beside a window inside and count the different birds that arrive to feast on your homemade suet. See if you can identify them with a bird book or searching on the computer.

### RECIPE for suet cakes

2 cups lard or Crisco; 1 cup peanut butter; 1/2 cup cornmeal; 2 cups oats; 1/2 cups raisins, currants or dried cranberries; 1/4 cup birdseed, sunflower seeds or peanuts; 1/ tsp. cayenne pepper (if you want to discourage squirrels);

empty suet package or tuna cans

Mix all ingredients together with large wooden spoon. Fill suet packages or tuna cans with mixture and put in the refrigerator to harden for a few hours. After naptime, remove suet from containers and put in suet holder or tie with string and hang from a tree branch. Or just put on the ground. Birds will find it.

Suet cakes don't involve a hot oven, don't have to rise and allow the kids to get hand-on messy. This recipe is flexible and allows for your own creativity with whatever

you have in the cupboard. And it provides a service to the grateful birds in your backyard or public space nearby. The only downside is that the children can't or probably shouldn't taste the mixture or lick the bowl.

### "Make your own pudding pops for lunch dessert."

Cooking with kids is always fun because they can get messy, they love wooden spoons and large mixing bowls and they can eat what they made.

### Pudding Pops

1/4 cup sugar, 1 Tb. unsweetened cocoa powder, 1 Tb. cornstarch, 2 cups cold milk, 2 ounces semisweet chocolate, 1 tsp. vanilla extract, 1/4 tsp. kosher salt.

Whisk together sugar, cocoa and cornstarch in medium saucepan and gradually whisk in milk until mixture is smooth. Set over heat and cook, whisking until mixture is bubbling (about 3 minutes). Remove from heat, add chocolate until melted, then stir in vanilla and salt. Distribute among popsicle molds or small paper cups and place in freezer. Put in popsicle stick when mixture is frozen enough for it to stand up straight.

Freeze 6 hours. Only one pudding pop at a time please.

### "Get ready for Easter."

There are the traditional Easter activities like decorating hard-boiled eggs but how about making your own chocolate eggs?

### Easter Egg Recipe

3/4 cup peanut butter  
1 tsp. vanilla  
1 can sweetened milk  
4 cups sifted powdered sugar  
Roll shapes, hopefully egg shapes, but who knows. Chill.

Dip in 1/2 pound semi-sweet chocolate chips melted with 1/3 slab paraffin.

If you like, decorate the eggs with the tubes of different colored icings in the baking aisle at the grocery.

### "Bake a Zoo"

Buy frozen pizza dough at the grocery store and let it thaw. Cut into pieces. Create zoo animals (or any other shape you like) and bake them. If you like, you can put pizza sauce on the top and sprinkle with mozzarella and have them for lunch.

# Opera NOVA, Democratizing Opera in Arlington

**“The way to democratize access was to start with children.”**

By SHIRLEY RUHE  
THE CONNECTION



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

**O**pera NOVA performed at the Kennedy Center Millennium Theatre on Feb. 22 as one of their three Black History Month performances.

“It was so exciting for us.” Miriam Miller, the long-time champion of Arlington opera, says she thought, “maybe if we do this enough like the Europeans, people will judge the voice instead of the skin.”

Miller explains since its inception in 1962 as Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia at the time, Opera NOVA has “democratized access to all of its events—not just a certain class or race or demographic, not just intellectuals but everybody.” As part of this effort to reach everyone, the opera has also organized their casts to include an all African-American cast concert as well as Latino, Asian and Russian concerts.

“I have been interested for a long time in doing something positive to fight segregation. I don’t know why. A long time ago I found Mattiwalda Dobbs who was opera

royalty living in Arlington. I had the idea of finding outstanding Black people we don’t know anything about and bringing them out to be seen.

“I told my idea to Elyse Jenkins, one of the top African sopranos. The way I conceived it was to mix past and present, to flesh out landmark people like Marion Anderson and Coretta Scott King, who many people don’t know sang opera.”

Larry King, the narrator for the Millennium concert said, “I think the reason I was chosen for narrator is that I had met all three of the honorees and had something personal to say about them. I met Leontine Price when she came along with my kindergarten teacher’s family to Thanksgiving dinner at our house one year. Someone asked her to sing and when she was finished someone said, “you will hear more from her someday.

“That’s when I first got interested in op-

era.”

King says the program at the Millennium weaved the stories of the honorees with the performers with the theme of past and present. He says Opera NOVA approached the Kennedy Center because they wanted more people exposed to Black opera singers. “The audience was so moved; they hadn’t known what to expect and they stayed around for a long time afterwards. They said they hadn’t seen anything like this.”

Miller says, “We had 255 in the audience. I can’t tell you what it meant to me. I was sitting in the front row and when I turned around I couldn’t believe it.”

Elise Jenkins says she was not only a performer that evening but organized the performers and the program for the evening. “Now I can say I was a soloist at the Kennedy Center.” Jenkins put together the program by meeting the performers on social media,

then face-to-face and getting recommendations from colleagues and friends on specific genres.

“African-American is still considered a minority genre and we wanted it to be a showcase for the talent we have.” She said at the end of the concert they asked the audience to join them in singing the first verse of the National Black anthem [Lift Every Voice and Sing] and when it was finished the audience remained standing.”

Opera NOVA began as Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia (OTNV). It was the first opera in Virginia and today is the Arlington is the smallest entity in the U.S. to have its own opera company. OTNV closed in 2011 and was restructured as Opera NOVA, which is a volunteer non-profit organization.

Miller says she got interested in the early 70s when her daughter was singing in the Washington Opera and she was still a working mother. Miller asked what she could do to help and in 1973 ended up establishing an Opera Guild and taking over marketing and promoting for Opera Theatre of Northern Virginia. “Everything was about integration in the 60s and 70s and we thought the only way to democratize access was to start with children.” So they met with the Chairman of the Arlington County Board and the Superintendent of Schools and have been following that concept ever since.

SEE OPERA NOVA, PAGE 11

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**Announcements**

**WELLBEING**

**Cooking in the Age of Coronavirus**

Turning pantry staples into delicious and nutritious meals.

By **MARILYN CAMPBELL**  
THE CONNECTION

During this time of social distancing, more time spent indoors and fewer trips to bare-shelf supermarkets, stocking the pantry with a food supply that's meant to last for weeks has become the new normal. No longer is dining out an option. From potato chips washed down by soda to canned tuna paired with frozen broccoli, cooking and eating food that's on hand can throw an entire household into an unhealthy culinary rut.

"This is not a snow storm that will melt in a few days. This isn't the time to eat more brownies, drink more wine and munch continually because you don't have much structure in your life," said licensed nutritionist Janet Zalman, MS, of the Zalman Nutrition Group. "You can't say, 'I'm going to go back to eating healthy when this pandemic is over,' because we don't know how long it's going to last. Eating healthy and keeping our bodies healthy can make a difference in a crisis, especially for preexisting health conditions like heart disease, obesity and diabetes."

With a little creativity, it's possible to turn pantry staples into healthy, but savory dishes that can be soul-soothing during this time of heightened anxiety, says Terri Carr of Terri's Table in Potomac. "Stews, chilies and soups [made with] ground meats, potatoes, canned beans and tomatoes and stock or broth cooking in a slow cooker or on the stovetop for a couple of hours release aromas that are inviting and comforting," she said. "Pasta dishes can be very diverse depending upon what ingredients you have available. They don't have to be limited to typical pasta sauces. Adding lots of onions, a bit of garlic, parmesan and even greens at the end of cooking the pasta can be very tasty and healthy."

The right mixture of herbs and seasonings can turn ho-hum meals into flavorful powerhouses. "Pesto is a terrific change and several types of pesto are easily available at grocery stores," said Carr. "I add leftover chicken to pasta dishes to provide protein and use up leftovers. Adding sundried tomatoes gives a big flavor boost in pasta dishes."

Even with the limited availability of some foods, it's still possible to find key ingredients to stock a healthy pantry. "Whole-grain pasta such as brown rice or buckwheat is a complete protein and you can add beans and vegetables on top of that for a complete protein ... option," said Teri Cochrane, author of *The Wildatarian Diet —Living as Nature Intended*,



PHOTOS BY TERRI CARR

A pantry stocked with a carefully planned array of staples can keep meals healthy and interesting.

and founder of the Global Sustainable Health Institute. "Dried beans or canned, organic beans are very cost-effective. You can get a bag of dried beans for less than two dollars. You can sauté frozen vegetables and when you pair that with brown or wild rice you can have a full protein meal for almost pennies per person."

"There are no frozen vegetables right now, but fresh vegetables are still in the supermarket," said Zalman. "You can wash them with soap and water."

From savory to sweet, ideas for preparing that produce abound, says Zalman. "You can roast carrots,"

she said. "Apples are around. You can make baked apples if you want something sweet. Have it with yogurt or ice cream or almond milk and you have a dessert."

Instead of reaching for a bag of potato chips, Zalman suggest slicing and baking sweet potatoes that have been brushed with oil and sprinkled with a dash of salt. "You can make popcorn on the stove and add herbs, a drop of salt unless you have high blood pressure," she said.

When the butcher section of the grocery store is low on meat, it's time to think inside the can. "If you want turkey burgers, but don't have turkey use canned salmon and make a

salmon burger," said Zalman. "It's delicious inexpensive and healthy. 'If you have kids you can make casseroles like a tuna casserole or a salmon casserole.'"

In fact, healthy cooking is a way to spend the extra family time we're given. "A good way to get families together in the kitchen is [making] things from scratch such as soups and breads or treats," said Cochrane.

**"If you want turkey burgers, but don't have turkey use canned salmon and make a salmon burger. It's delicious, inexpensive and healthy."**

— **Janet Zalman,**  
**Zalman Nutrition Group**

# NEWS

## Opera NOVA

FROM PAGE 9

Now they hold four children's concerts a year reaching 3,000 school children in an opera designed just for them. They hold these concerts in Thomas Jefferson Community Center, which holds 700 in its auditorium and has an orchestra pit. "Many of these children have never seen an orchestra pit."

Miller says children bus in from all over including students from public, private, parochial and home-schools. This year's production was the bilingual one act classic "Monkey See, Monkey Do," performed in February. Since Opera NOVA believes in education through entertainment, a study guide relevant to the opera detailing the story line, author of the opera and the cast, accompanies each opera. This allows the teacher to incorporate the opera into the school lessons. One teacher commented she had been hesitant to take her students the first year but has now been back four years in a row. One of her students commented that someone in the cast "looked just like them." In addition Opera NOVA has expanded its performances to include special concerts for seniors as well as their regular performances for the public.

### BULLETIN BOARD

FROM PAGE 2

location where personal care or personal grooming services are performed that would not allow compliance with social distancing guidelines to remain six feet apart; Racetracks and historic horse racing facilities; Bowling alleys, skating rinks, arcades, amusement parks, trampoline parks, fairs, arts and craft facilities, aquariums, zoos, escape rooms, indoor shooting ranges, public and private social clubs, and all other places of indoor public amusement.

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## Cancer in a Pandemic



By KENNETH B. LOURIE

So far as I can tell, I'm being treated as per usual. Meaning, treatment for my recently diagnosed thyroid cancer is on track. On track meaning multiple hospital visits at two health care facilities (some even on the same day) over five consecutive days to include four radioiodine injections, pre-and post-treatment CT scans, lab work, miscellaneous other medical appointments and a low iodine diet to boot spread out over a nearly six-week interval including one over-night at the hospital.

To say I'm looking forward to the experience would be naive. To say I'm looking forward to killing the remaining thyroid cancer in my body would be more accurate. The thyroidectomy I had in late January was very successful but approximately 15 percent of the cancer remains, embedded under my collarbone and elsewhere. Consequently, treatment of my pre-existing/underlying stage IV non small cell lung cancer will be further delayed while we address the thyroid cancer which the surgeon was unable to remove. And now that I have my schedule, as of March 27, I now know when and where and how the process will play out.

One potential major complication: the coronavirus pandemic. Given the screening questions I have been asked of late when calling for medical information, if I am unlucky and somehow become infected or come in contact with someone who has been diagnosed or travel/have traveled to an area of the country/world particularly hard hit, I am guessing my treatment stops/never gets started. And not to be too paranoid about something which hasn't even happened yet but, I'd just as soon not become another statistic and/or not get my cancer treatment and allow my two types of cancer to live on without any checks or balances. (Generally speaking, if the cancer is left alone, it likely won't spontaneously go into remission. Quite the opposite in fact and therein lies my fear of having 'cancer in a pandemic.')

I imagine that at any time over the next six weeks, a hundred things could change that could adversely affect my treatment/schedule, many of which are beyond my control. And not that I'm a controlling person, but when it comes to medical treatment that might actually be saving/extending my life, I do become a bit preoccupied. And if push does come to shove, so to speak, there's not much that I can say or do about circumstances (staffing issues, medicine shortages, reduced hours, increase in patients, etc.) which might affect the availability of health care. As a cancer patient, you'd like to have a little predictability given that your normal routine is hardly what you anticipated. However, none of us anticipated a pandemic and now all us patients are waiting for chips to fall and wondering/hoping our names will be on the treatment list.

Unfortunately, cancer treatment is not hit or miss. It mostly needs to hit. And if some of the hits can't happen when protocol says it should, there is reason to be afraid. But being afraid now, before any of these pandemic-related complications have even occurred is a waste of time, energy and emotional wherewithal. I don't need to worry yet. If any of these worse-case scenarios do happen, there will be plenty of time to worry later. At the moment, I'm scheduled, I'm not sick and I'm able to social-distance, self-isolate and shelter-in-place until further notice.

I just wish 'further notice' wasn't a month from now. So much can happen to so many at so many places, most of which I can't prevent. And yet, if these happenings are not prevented, it's possible the powers that most likely be will inform me that circumstances have overtaken their plans and my treatment will have to be delayed. I'm so close. Thirty days however is an eternity for a cancer patient. Somehow, I have to stop watching the calendar. I have to watch my "ps" and "qs" instead and avoid any unnecessary social interactions. I'd like to think that come the end of April, I'll be ready, willing and available. I just hope that I can say the same thing about the medical professionals and hospitals where I'll be getting treatment.

Kenny Lourie is an Advertising Representative for The Potomac Almanac & The Connection Newspapers.

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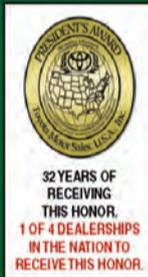
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NOT VALID WITH ANY OTHER OFFER OR COUPON. TOYOTA VEHICLES ONLY. COUPON MUST BE PRESENTED AT TIME OF WRITE-UP. VALID ONLY AT ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA. TAX AND SHOP SUPPLIES ADDITIONAL. OFFER EXPIRES 4/30/20.

**BRAKE SPECIAL**  
**\$79.95**

**Includes:** Install Genuine Toyota front brake pads, inspect front & rear rotors & drums, check tire condition and inspect all hardware. Pads only.

**MACHINE ROTORS ADDITIONAL**

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**BG BG VITAL FLUID SERVICE**  
**10% OFF** YOUR FIRST SERVICE  
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Power Steering • Automatic Transmission • Brake System

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**OIL & FILTER CHANGE**  
**\$24.95** NON-SYNTHETIC  
**\$34.95** SYNTHETIC

**Includes:** Genuine Toyota oil filter, up to 5 qts of conventional oil\*, inspect windshield wipers, check tire condition, check battery (with print-out), inspect and adjust all fluid levels, inspect air & cabin air filters.

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**NEW HOURS SPECIAL!**  
**DROP OFF YOUR VEHICLE BETWEEN 6AM & 7AM**  
**WITH A SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT & RECEIVE 12% OFF ANY ONE REPAIR.**

MAXIMUM DISCOUNT, \$150  
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Jack Taylor's

**ALEXANDRIA TOYOTA**

**TRUESTART™ BATTERIES**  
**SPECIAL OFFER \$129.95**  
INCLUDES BATTERY INSTALLATION  
**Includes:** 84 month warranty, 24 month free replacement, 24 month free roadside assistance.  
Does not apply to hybrid batteries.

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